

THE ANALYSIS OF NOVICE VOTER'S BEHAVIORS IN THE 2024 REGIONAL ELECTIONS AT GKPI PADANG BULAN HIGH SCHOOL, MEDAN BARU DISTRICT, MEDAN CITY

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the behaviour of novice voters in the 2024 regional elections at GKPI Padang Bulan Private High School. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, this study describes the behavioural phenomenon of GKPI Padang Bulan Private High School students when choosing the leaders they choose. Data was collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis was carried out using inductive analysis techniques that were systematically compiled through the results of observation, interviews, and documentation. The study results show that first-time voters understand the importance of participation in elections and actively seek information, especially through social media. However, the challenge of disinformation remains, which can influence voter decisions. This research is expected to provide insight into the behaviour of novice voters and contribute to developing more effective election socialization strategies.

Keywords : Behavior, Beginner Voters, Regional Elections



A. Introduction

The growth of information today is progress along with the times. In the current era of globalization and digital transformation, information and society's interaction can be intertwined via the internet. Social media is an inseparable thing in digital information transformation. At this time, active internet users worldwide now reach 3.17 billion. From year to year, internet users grew by 7.6%. The growth of internet use also affects the growth of social media and mobile users. According to the same report, active social media users now reach 2.2 billion, while mobile users reach 3.7 billion. Interestingly, users accessing social media through mobile platforms¹ showed the most significant growth.

The use of social media is also very high in Indonesia. Of the 174.6 internet users in Indonesia, 160 million are active social media users. Through these figures, using social media to attract the public's attention will be easier², however, in the advancement of the internet in influencing the public cause positive and negative sides. Several parties can misuse the rapid dissemination of information to spread hoaxes and cause disinformation in a crowded society. This can have a great influence on society, especially on social media users.

In political world, it is very important to build good political communication. It is aimed to own a good image and perception from the community. Nowadays, social media become a good place for political actors to carry out political campaigns. The use of social media is considered more effective and cost-effective with a very wide range. This year as the direct elections

¹ Edi Suryadi, Muhammad Hidayat Ginanjar, and Muhamad Priyatna, "The Use of Whatsapp Social Media Affects Students' Learning Discipline in Islamic Religious Education Subjects (Case Study at SMK Kimia Analyst YKPI Bogor)," *Islamic Education: Journal of Islamic Education* 7, no. 01 (2018): 1, <https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.v7i01.211>.

² Fabian Chandra, *Social Media Marketing, Strategies for Maximizing Social Media* (Diva Press, 2021).



become the right time for politician to campaigns through social media to influence voters as known as Indonesia as the large number of people who use social media.

The voter's behaviour can be greatly influenced by several internal and external factors. The approaches to voter behavior can be sociological, psychological, and rational. In influencing these behaviours, *buzzers arise* in political communication on social media. We often see The emergence of social media buzzers on social media platforms. A political figure hires a professional political buzzer to spread the word about his campaign on social media. When this function is used to spread false information, incite hatred among political opponents, and sow discord in society, it becomes a dangerous instrument of power³.

For novice voters, the use of social media can have an expected impact on political participation and voting behaviour. Therefore, the researcher chose the title "Behavior of Novice Voters in the 2024 Regional Elections at GKPI Padang Bulan Private High School".

This research was carried out using a descriptive qualitative approach. Through this approach, researchers can freely describe, explain, and tell phenomena in the field in real life. The reason why researcher chooses this model of research is because with the researcher believes that this method can dig up information in detail in with narrative ways⁴. The author chose a qualitative research method. Qualitative research is based on the philosophy of postpositivism, used to research a natural object. The qualitative research method is a naturalistic

³ Charisma Dina Wulandari, "The Buzzer Phenomenon on Social Media Ahead of the 2024 Election in the Perspective of Political Communication," *Avant Garde* 11, no. 1 (2023): 134, <https://doi.org/10.36080/ag.v11i1.2380>.

⁴ Lexy Moleong, *Qualitative Research Methodology*, Revi Edition (Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya, 2018).



research method because the research is carried out in a natural setting ⁵.

B. Method

This research was carried out using a descriptive qualitative approach. Through this approach, researchers can freely describe, explain, and tell phenomena in the field in real life. The researcher chooses this model of research because the researcher believes that this method can dig up information in detail in narrative ways ⁶. The author chose a qualitative research method. Qualitative research is based on the philosophy of postpositivism, used to research a natural object. The qualitative research method is a naturalistic research method because the research is carried out in a natural setting ⁷.

1. Result and Discussion

This research aims to understand the behavior of novice voters at GKPI Padang Bulan High School, Medan Baru District, Medan City, in facing the 2024 Regional Elections. Data was obtained from questionnaires and interviews with students who are eligible as voters in the upcoming Regional Elections. The results of this study reveal that novice voters in this school already understand the process and participation in the Regional Elections. Most students stated that they already knew about the existence of the 2024 Regional Elections, which they obtained from various sources, including social media, class discussions in PKN lessons, and socialization activities held by related parties. This high level of awareness shows that novice

⁵ Sugiyono, *Educational Research Methods (Quantitative, Qualitative, and R&D Approaches)* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2008).

⁶ Lexy Moleong, *Qualitative Research Methodology*, Revi Edition (Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya, 2018).

⁷ Sugiyono, *Educational Research Methods (Quantitative, Qualitative, and R&D Approaches)* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2008).



voters at SMAS GKPI Padang Bulan have understood that the Regional Elections are an important mechanism to determine regional leaders who will influence the direction of policies in the city of Medan.

In addition to awareness about the Regional Elections, these novice voters also showed a fairly good understanding of the stages in the Regional Elections. Some students can explain the basic process which includes candidacy, campaign period, voting, and vote counting. They also realize that the campaign is a moment for prospective leaders to introduce their vision, mission, and work program to the community. This shows a fairly deep level of understanding from novice voters regarding the Pilkada procedure. The students also assessed the importance of participation in the Regional Elections. Many stated that they wanted to be directly involved in determining regional leaders, because they hoped that the elected candidates would be able to bring positive changes to the people of Medan City.

According to their opinions, the Regional Election is not just an obligation, but also an opportunity to voice their hopes through choices made in the voting booth. In addition, they think that participation in the Regional Elections is a tangible manifestation of responsibility as a citizen and provides valuable experience in democracy. Furthermore, these novice voters have a fairly critical awareness of the vision and mission of prospective candidates. They admitted that they were familiar with several programs and ideas carried out by the candidates, both through social media, television broadcasts, and billboards scattered around the city of Medan. Some students even specifically seek additional information in order to be able to choose candidates who have a focus on education, health, and safety, because they feel that these aspects are very relevant to their needs and that of the wider community. Overall, this study shows that novice voters at SMAS GKPI Padang Bulan have a good understanding of the implementation of the Regional Elections, the important



stages, and the reasons why they need to participate. In addition, these novice voters have been quite critical in assessing the vision and mission of the candidate who will advance. With the awareness and understanding they have; it is hoped that they can participate in the 2024 Medan City Election intelligently and wisely in choosing the best leaders.

Political behavior and voter political participation are an inseparable unit, voter political behavior is an important aspect in supporting the successful implementation of a general election. In the implementation of elections in a country or in the implementation of direct elections in a region, political behavior can be in the form of people's behavior in determining attitudes and choices in the implementation of the election or regional elections ⁸. Indonesia is a country that upholds democracy. Political participation in a democratic country is an indicator of the implementation in the highest state power that is legitimate by the people (people's sovereignty), which is manifested in their involvement in the democratic party (elections). The higher the level of political participation indicates that the people follow and understand and involve themselves in state activities.

C. Conclusion

This study shows that novice voters at GKPI Padang Bulan Private High School have a good level of awareness about the 2024 Regional Elections. They understand the importance of participation in the election process and have obtained information from various sources, especially social media and socialization activities in schools. In addition, novice voters

⁸ Rifaldy Sangkoy, Marlien Lopian, and Ronny Gosal, "Political Behavior of Novice Voters in the 2016 General Election of Regional Heads of South Minahasa Regency (Study in Ranomea Village, East Amurang District, South Minahasa Regency)," *Journal of the Department of Government Sciences* 1, no. 1 (2019): 1–14, <https://ejournal.unsrat.ac.id/v3/index.php/jurnaleksekutif/article/view/23299%0Ahttps://ejournal.unsrat.ac.id/v3/index.php/jurnaleksekutif/article/download/23299/22992>.



showed a sufficient understanding of the stages in the Regional Elections.

The influence of social media on the behavior of novice voters has also proven to be significant, where they are exposed to a variety of information that can influence their choices. However, challenges such as disinformation and hoaxes remain a concern that needs to be addressed, so that voters can make more rational and informational decisions.

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